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September 19, 2016

To: Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, Chair
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From: Philip L. Browning
Director

by Brandon Nichols

FRED JEFFERSON MEMORIAL HOME FOR BOYS GROUP HOME QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Out-of-Home Care Management Division (OHCMD) conducted a Quality Assurance Review (QAR) of the Fred Jefferson Memorial Home for Boys Group Home (the Group Home) in March 2016. The Group Home is a Rate Classification Level 10 and has two sites located in the Second Supervisorial District. The Group Home provides services to the County of Los Angeles DCFS placed children. According to the Group Home's Program Statement, its stated purpose is, "to provide adolescents in need of out-of-home placement with a safe and secure home to live. We offer a program of services designed to meet individual needs. As appropriate, we will work with families toward reunification. We coordinate our efforts to provide continuity and quality of programming."

The QAR looked at the status of the placed children's safety, permanency, and well-being during the most recent 30 days and the Group Home's practices and services over the most recent 90 days. The Group Home scored at or above the minimum acceptable score in 8 of 9 focus areas: Safety, Permanency, Placement Stability, Visitation, Engagement, Service Needs, Assessment & Linkages, and Tracking & Adjustment. The OHCMD noted an opportunity for improved performance in the focus area of Teamwork.

In May 2016, the OHCMD Quality Assurance Reviewer met with the Group Home to discuss the results of the QAR and to provide the Group Home with technical support to address methods for improvement in the area of Teamwork. The Group Home provided

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the attached approved Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) addressing the recommendations noted in this report.

If you have any questions, your staff may contact me or Aldo Marin, Board Relations Manager at (213) 351-5530.

PLB:KR
KDR:rds

Attachments

c: Sachi A. Hamai, Chief Executive Officer
John Naimo, Auditor-Controller
Public Information Office
Audit Committee
Dr. Cecelia Jefferson-Freeman, Executive Director, Fred Jefferson Memorial Home for Boys Group Home
Lajuannah Hills, Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing Division
Lenora Scott, Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing Division

**FRED JEFFERSON MEMORIAL HOME FOR BOYS GROUP HOME
QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW (QAR)
FISCAL YEAR 2015-2016**

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The Out-of-Home Care Management Division (OHCMD) conducted a Quality Assurance Review (QAR) of the Fred Jefferson Memorial Home for Boys Group Home (the Group Home) in March 2016. The purpose of the QAR is to assess the Group Home's service delivery and to ensure that the Group Home is providing children with quality care and services in a safe environment, which includes physical care, social and emotional support, education and workforce readiness, and other services to protect and enhance their growth and development.

The QAR is an in-depth case review and interview process designed to assess how children and their families are benefiting from services received and how well the services are working. The QAR utilizes a six-point rating scale as a *yardstick* for measuring the situation observed in specific focus areas. The QAR assessed the following focus areas:

Status Indicators:

- Safety
- Permanency
- Placement Stability
- Visitation

Practice Indicators:

- Engagement
- Service Needs
- Assessment & Linkages
- Teamwork
- Tracking & Adjustment

For Status Indicators, the QAR focuses on the focus child's functioning during the most recent 30-day period and for Practice Indicators, the QAR focuses on the Group Home's service delivery during the most recent 90-day period.

For the purpose of this QAR, interviews were conducted with three focus children, three Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Children's Social Workers (CSWs), and three Group Home staff members.

At the time of the QAR, the Group Home served 12 DCFS placed children. The focus children's average number of placements was three, their overall average length of placement was nine months and their average age was 15. The focus children were randomly selected. None of the focus children were included as part of the sample for the Contract Administration Division's (CAD's) 2015-2016 Contract Compliance Review.

QAR SCORING

The Group Home received a score for each focus area based on information gathered from on-site visits, agency file reviews, DCFS court reports and updated case plans, and interviews with the Group Home staff, DCFS CSWs, service providers, and the focus children. The minimum acceptable score is 6 in the area of Safety and 5 in all remaining areas.

Focus Area	Minimum Acceptable Score	Group Home QAR Score	Group Home QAR Rating
Safety - The degree to which the Group Home staff ensures that the focus children are free of abuse, neglect and exploitation by others in his/her placement and other settings.	6	6 - Optimal Safety Status	The focus children have a highly safe living situation with fully reliable and competent caregivers and are protected well at all times. Protective strategies are fully operative and dependable.
Permanency - The degree to which the focus children are living with caregivers, who are likely to remain in this role until the focus children reach adulthood, or the focus children are in the process of returning home or transitioning to a permanent home and the focus children, the Group Home staff, caregivers, DCFS CSWs and if applicable, Department of Probation Officers (DPOs) support the plan.	5	5 - Good Status	The focus children have substantial permanence. The focus children live in a family setting that the focus children, Group Home staff and team members have confidence will endure lifelong.

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Focus Area	Minimum Acceptable Score	Group Home QAR Score	Group Home QAR Rating
Placement Stability - The degree to which the Group Home staff ensures that the focus children's daily living, learning and work arrangements are stable and free from risk of disruptions. Known risks are being managed to achieve stability and reduce the probability of future disruptions.	5	5 - Good Stability	The focus children have substantial stability in placement and school settings with only planned changes and no more than one disruption in either setting over the past 30 days.
Visitation - The degree to which the Group Home staff support maintaining important connections with significant family members/Non-Related Extended Family Members (NREFMs) through appropriate visitation and other means.	5	6 - Optimal Maintenance of Visitation and Connections	Fully effective connections are being excellently maintained for all significant family members/NREFMs through appropriate visits and other connecting strategies. All appropriate family members/NREFMs have regular visits.
Engagement - The degree to which the Group Home staff working with the focus children and their family members/NREFMs and other team members for the purpose of building a genuine, trusting and collaborative working relationship with the ability to concentrate on the focus children's strengths and needs.	5	5 - Good Engagement Efforts	To a strong degree, a rapport has been developed, such that the Group Home staff, DCFS CSWs, DPOs (if applicable) and the focus children feel heard and respected. Reports indicate that good, consistent efforts are being used.

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Focus Area	Minimum Acceptable Score	Group Home QAR Score	Group Home QAR Rating
Service Needs - The degree to which the Group Home staff involved with the focus children work toward ensuring the focus children's needs are met and identified services are being implemented and supported and are specifically tailored to meet the focus children's unique needs.	5	5 - Good Supports and Services	A good and substantial array of supports and services substantially matches intervention strategies identified in the focus children's case plans. The services are generally helping the focus children make progress toward planned outcomes.
Assessment & Linkages - The degree to which the Group Home staff involved with the focus children and their family members/NREFMs understand the focus children's strengths, needs, preferences and underlying needs and services provided are regularly assessed to ensure progress is being made toward case plan goals.	5	5 - Good Assessment and Understanding	The focus children's functioning and support systems are generally understood. Information necessary to understand the focus children's strengths, needs and preferences is frequently updated.
Teamwork - The degree to which the "right people" for the focus children and their family members/NREFMs, have formed a working team that meets, talks and makes plans together.	5	4 - Minimally Adequate to Fair Teamwork	The team contains some of the important supporters and decision-makers in the focus children's lives, including informal supports. The team has formed a minimally adequate to fair working system that meets, talks and plans together.

Focus Area	Minimum Acceptable Score	Group Home QAR Score	Group Home QAR Rating
Tracking & Adjustment - The degree to which the Group Home staff involved with the focus children and their family members/NREFMs are carefully tracking the progress that the focus children are making, changing family circumstances, attainment of goals and planned outcomes.	5	5 - Good Tracking and Adjustment Process	Intervention strategies, supports and services being provided to the focus children are generally responsive to changing conditions. Frequent monitoring, tracking and communication of the focus children's status is occurring.

OHCMD conducted the last QAR of the Group Home in April 2015 and noted an opportunity for improvement in the focus area of Safety. In November 2015, the Quality Assurance Reviewer met with the Group Home to discuss the results of the QAR and to provide the Group Home with technical support to address methods for improvement in this area. Based on the information below, it appears that the Group Home showed improvement in the area of Safety on their 2015-2016 QAR.

STATUS INDICATORS
(Measured over last 30 days)

Status Indicators	Safety	Permanency	Placement Stability	Visitation
2014-2015 Scores	4	5	5	5
2015-2016 Scores	6	5	5	6

In the area of Safety, the OHCMD found that the Group Home had implemented their 2014-2015 Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) to enhance the quality of care provided to the placed children in its care. The Group Home conducted several trainings with their staff to improve performance in this area. All of the focus children stated that they feel comfortable in the Group Home and with the Group Home staff. The first focus child stated that the Group Home staff was always there and being able to talk to the Group Home staff made him feel safe. The second focus child reported that it's the staff talking with him that encourages and helps him to do better. The third focus child reported, "You can't do dumb things and irritate people. My staff talks to me and helps me make the right decisions." The Group Home child care workers reported that there are ongoing trainings on policies and procedures. One Group Home staff member stated that he talks to the placed children; if there is a problem, he will try to fix it and if he cannot, he will bring it to the attention of the Group Home facility manager or the Group Home administrator to work out a good resolution for the placed child.

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During the 2014-2015 QAR, it was noted that the Group Home had a significant number of safety related incidents. As part of their QIP, the Group Home developed a new plan in an effort to reduce safety related incidents. The plan includes each of the Group Home staff during their shift has one-on-one time with the placed children. This is done to connect with the placed children and prevent any disruptive behavior. It should be noted that during this QAR, the quantity of safety related incidents were reduced from last year. DCFS CSWs reported that there is good communication with the Group Home staff. One DCFS CSW stated that the Group Home was really good with letting her know if there were any issues with her focus child.

In the areas of Permanency and Placement Stability, the Group Home continues to provide a good quality of services and stability to the focus children. For two of the focus children, the permanency goal is Family Reunification. The Group Home is working towards their permanency goals by providing them with therapeutic services such as individual and family counseling. One focus child is supported by the Group Home in reaching his permanency goal for Planned Permanent Living Arrangement by preparing him for self-sufficiency. The Group Home has provided this focus child with in-home independent and daily living services, such as taking public transportation, washing clothes, preparing meals and preparing for job interviews. Due to the Group Home's efforts, this focus child was on track to graduate from high school in June 2016 and is working part-time for a government municipality. The focus child did graduate and received his high school diploma. The focus child was transitioned into a lower level of care into the home of a relative. The focus children have developed positive relationships with the Group Home staff and Group Home Social Worker. The focus children have not experienced any disruption in their placement or school setting. The first focus child stated that the Group Home staff talks to him and tries to resolve his concerns. The second focus child felt and expressed that the Group Home staff cared about him. The third focus child stated that the placement helps him to do better and to work on himself. He further added that the Group Home Administrator and Executive Director are always available to discuss any concerns he may have.

In the area of Visitation, the Group Home provides optimal visitation and connections for the focus children. The focus children reported that they are encouraged to have regular telephone contact with friends and family members/NREFMs. The focus children also reported that they are allowed community passes so they can spend free time with their friends. The focus children reported that the Group Home staff transports them to and from their weekend visits with their families. This protocol was implemented by the Group Home Executive Director to ensure that no visit was missed due to lack of transportation. The Group Home staff reported that they are flexible in scheduling visits. There is ongoing communication with approved visitors. One focus child has been successfully matched with a mentor. The DCFS CSWs reported that they had no issues with the Group Home regarding the area of Visitation.

PRACTICE INDICATORS
(Measured over last 90 days)

Practice Indicators	Engagement	Service Needs	Assessment & Linkages	Teamwork	Tracking & Adjustment
2014-2015 Scores	5	5	5	5	5
2015-2016 Scores	5	5	5	4	5

In the areas of Engagement, Service Needs, Assessment & Linkages, and Tracking & Adjustment, the Group Home continues to make good efforts to engage the focus children and key people in decisions that are being made on their behalf. The Group Home's engagement process consists of the Group Home connecting and sharing information on a regular basis via telephone, face-to-face contacts and e-mails with the people important to the placed children. The focus children reported that they have a good connection with the Group Home staff. The Group Home continues to offer a good array of services to the focus children such as individual and group counseling and drug treatment counseling. Intervention strategies identified in the case plan and Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) match the services that are being provided to the focus children. The Group Home staff reviews the focus children's needs and strengths daily in order to provide and adjust the proper resources to assist them in performing successfully in their daily environments. The DCFS CSWs reported that the Group Home consistently shares information regarding the well-being and progress of the focus children on a consistent basis.

In the area of Teamwork, the OHCMD found that the Group Home declined in quality in this area. The focus children and DCFS CSWs reported that they were not included in formal team meetings. The OHCMD Quality Assurance Reviewer met with the Group Home staff to discuss methods in which the Group Home could improve in this area that would be beneficial for the Group Home, and the focus and placed children.

NEXT STEPS TO SUSTAIN SUCCESS AND OVERCOME CURRENT CHALLENGES

In August 2015, the OHCMD provided the Group Home with technical support related to the CAD's 2015-2016 Contract Compliance Review findings in the areas of Licensure/Contract Requirements, Facility and Environment, Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery, Health and Medical Needs, Personal Rights and Social/Emotional Well-Being, and Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-Being. Technical support was provided on how the Group Home can ensure that Group Home vehicles are always in good repair; Special Incident Reports are properly cross-reported; allowance logs are maintained; they are in compliance with Title 22 Regulations; common areas and children's bedrooms are well maintained; Needs and Services Plans are comprehensive; follow-up medical examinations are timely; an appropriate rewards and discipline system is in place; children are given the opportunity to plan social activities; and children are provided with minimum weekly allowances.

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In May 2016, the Quality Assurance Reviewer met with the Group Home to discuss the results of the QAR and to provide the Group Home with technical support addressing methods on improving in the area of Teamwork. The Group Home submitted the attached QIP. The OHCMD Quality Assurance staff will continue to provide ongoing technical support, training, and consultation to assist the Group Home in implementing their QIP.

**Fred Jefferson Memorial Homes For Boys
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September 15, 2016

Esther Pulido, CSA II
Department of Children and Family Services
Administrative Support Bureau
Out-of-Home Care Management Division
9320 Telstar Avenue, Suite 216
El Monte, CA 91731

Dear Ms. Pulido,

The following is an amended response to the Quality Improvement Plan initially submitted on 6/13/2016 for the Fred Jefferson Memorial Group Homes Quality Assurance Review that concluded on 5/5/2016. The following plan is being provided to address the concern and unsatisfactory score regarding Teamwork.

Team Meetings Quality Improvement Plan

In the April/May 2016 Fred Jefferson Memorial Homes QAR it was requested that the level of teamwork quality provided by the agency be improved. This will be addressed by an increased frequency of team meetings involving all parties involved in our client's case treatment plans. Our agency social workers will be required to request a team meeting with the appropriate parties within 14 days of a DCFS county social worker being assigned to the case OR within 30 days of placement, whichever date shall come first. The meeting shall include the placed child, Fred Jefferson agency social worker, county social worker and group home facility manager (*or other designated representative*). If the meeting is taking place prior to an official DCFS social worker being assigned to the case, then the placing ER worker will be contacted to either participate or recommend appropriate representation. Additional persons that are important to the child and are involved in the creation and/or success of the case treatment plan for the child will also be included. This may include W.R.A.P. workers, specialized therapists, family members, or potential adoptive parents, etc.

Follow up meetings will be conducted every 90 days following the initial team meeting. Additional meetings may be called as needed if there are critical items to be addressed on a more frequent basis. These meetings will help to ensure that all parties involved in the plan for the child are on one accord and to aid the child in seeing that they have an entire team paying attention to their needs and working in their best interest. If needed, alternate forms of communication outside of face-to-face will be used to ensure the meetings can be conducted and

all necessary parties can be involved. This may be accomplished via conference calls, having certain members of the team on speaker phone, and/or some form of web video conference.

By June 18, 2016 the administrator ensured that all members of the Fred Jefferson Memorial Group Home staff were informed of this new requirement. The following page is the template that will be used for each team meeting. The group home facility manager will ensure that each person invited to the meeting will receive a copy of the signed template within 7 days of the team meeting. The Fred Jefferson administrator will oversee the above plan to ensure that it is conducted. If there ~~are~~ any further questions or concerns regarding this plan please feel free to contact me.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Freeman', is written over the printed name.

David Freeman
Administrator

310-629-2512

dfreeman@fredjefferson.org